

CVC Newsletter

June 2004

Countryside Veterinary
Clinic, Ltd.

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Otitis Externa

Due to increased heat and humidity, the incidence of otitis externa, (external ear infections), increases during the summer months. The anatomy of the external ear canal of the cat and dog is much different than that of a human. It has a long vertical canal that curves sharply inward to form the horizontal canal toward the eardrum. Therefore, if we are just checking and cleaning the outermost portion of the ear that we can see, we may be missing infection that is brewing deeper down. It is recommended that an ear cleansing solution be used routinely to help prevent otitis externa, and if there is hair growing in the ear canal, that hair should also be plucked. Symptoms of infection include redness, odor, and excessive discharge coming from the ear. The pet may also be scratching at the ears or flopping the ears when they are infected. Topical cleansing solutions and ointments are often prescribed to treat ear infections. In addition, oral antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medications may be needed. Cultures can be taken from the ear in order to identify the particular type of bacteria or yeast present so that the most effective treatment for your pet can be chosen. Your veterinarian can also check you pet's ears for ear mites, which are a tiny parasite that can also cause itching and discharge for the ear. Severe cases of otitis may even require flushing of the ear canal while under anesthesia. We now know that there can be other factors at play, predisposing certain pets to otitis externa. Hypothyroidism (low thyroid levels) and allergies are two other factors now known to play a role in pets with recurrent ear infections. Blood testing for thyroid levels, allergy testing, and hypoallergenic food trials are commonly used as diagnostic tools for pets with frequent episodes of otitis externa.



Pet of the Month

**Mr. Handsome
AKA Muggs**

He is smart, friendly to all especially children, and a most enjoyable member of our family.

Traveling With Your Pet

When planning a family vacation, first consider whether your pet will be comfortable while traveling. Pets that experience car-sickness or that have medical impairments may be better off staying in a well-managed boarding facility or with a reliable pet-sitter. If your pet will have to be left for extended periods of time in a motel room, he or she may be uncomfortable in strange surroundings.

When traveling by car or plane, be sure that your pet is properly identified with a current tag and microchip. Taking its favorite food, toys, and dishes along will make your pet feel more at home. Keep your rabies certificate and tag as well as a current health certificate handy when you are crossing state or international borders. A health certificate, which is a legal document prepared by your veterinarian at the time of a physical exam, needs to be issued within ten days when flying and within thirty days when driving. Consult your veterinarian to be sure that vaccinations are up-to-date and to decide together whether your pet might benefit from tranquilization during the trip.

When transporting your pet by plane, contact the airlines in advance for any specific requirements that they might have. Pets need to be at least 8 weeks old and weaned for at least 5 days before flying. Try to book nonstop midweek flights when possible. During warm weather months, choose early morning and evening flights, and in colder months, choose midday flights. Arrive at the airport early, exercise your pet, and personally be the one to put your pet in its crate. Pick pets up promptly upon arrival. Make sure that the crate is appropriately labeled, with your name, home address, home phone number, and destination contact information. The crate should have a "Live Animals" designation on it, with arrows indicating the crate's upright position.

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Congratulations!

Jenn is this month's "Employee of the Month". Jenn has only been with our team for a short period of time, however she is dedicated to pets and providing client service. She is active in learning medical information and understands the importance of assisting people. She has a strong attention to details and a willing team member. In addition to receptionist responsibilities she also assists with ordering and billing. Jenn has come to work early and stayed late so that we could greet our guests in person and on the phone. To show appreciation Countryside Veterinary Clinic awards Jenn "Employee of the Month".

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CVC Team Announcements

Anniversaries

Dr. Cozen	8 years
Jake	2 years

Birthdays

Missy H.	June 27
Michalene N.	June 27
Kim H.	June 28

Traveling With Your Pet (continued)

If your pet is not accustomed to car travel, take it for a few short rides prior to the trip. Cats should be confined to a cage or crate to help them feel more secure and to avoid having a pet disturb the driver. Dogs can be crated or use a pet safety belt to secure them in the seat. Give your pet only a light meal before starting the trip, and feed the main meal in the evening when you arrive at your destination. Take along a plastic jug of cool water and give small portions along the way. Plan to stop at least every 2 hours to exercise your pet. Pets should not be allowed to ride with their heads outside car windows. Particles of dirt can irritate the eyes, ears, and nose. If you must leave your pet in a parked car, be sure to lock all doors, park in a shady area and open windows wide enough to provide ventilation without being able to jump out. Pets should not be left in cars when the temperature and humidity is high or when temperatures are at or near freezing.

Remember when traveling to country settings, that your pet might encounter wild animals, so keep them within sight or on a leash. Be sure to ask your veterinarian about recommendations for flea, tick, and heartworm prevention beforehand. Pick a simple first-aid kit, with some bandage materials, antibiotic ointment, and an antidiarrheal medication that is safe for pets (ask your veterinarian to suggest a product). Call ahead to make sure that pets will be welcome at your motel or campground. Carry phone numbers of your veterinarian, a poison control hotline, and an emergency veterinary facility near where you'll be staying. Perform a daily health check on your pet, and consult a local veterinarian if you have any concerns.

To: Our Valued
Countryside Veterinary
Clinic Clients